

DCFS Child Day Care Licensing Advisory Council

April 25, 2019 from 11:00 am – 1:00 pm
DCFS 1911 S. Indiana Ave. Chicago, IL 60616 – Conference Room 924
Conference Call Number: 1.888.494.4032; Access Code: 4716316166#

Meeting Minutes

I. Attendance:

DCFS:

Shontee Blankenship
Mary Harlan
Deb DeValdivielso
Theenshina Mayfield
Bridget McKnight
Carol Morris
Merissa Pryor
Victoria Range
Beth Seggebruch
George Vennikandam, Co-Chair
Edie Washington Gurley
Jill Wilson

Tom Layman
Denise Monnier

Members via phone:

Missy Brown
Dana Davis
Kisha Davis
Mary Jane Forney
Maggie Keane
Dara Munson
Emily Ropars
Stephanie Spanbauer
Sarah Stoliker

Members in-person:

Jennifer Alexander
Carie Bires
Maria Estlund, Co-Chair
Dr. Jamilah Jor'dan

Public (Non-appointed Members):

DeCarla Burton
Donna Emmons
Gail Nelson
Bethany Patten

II. Welcome and Introductions

III. Approval of Minutes from February 21, 2019

- a. Motion: Dr. Jamilah Jor'dan
- b. Second: Denise Monnier

IV. Department Updates – George Vennikandam

Discussion:

George Vennikandam shared some department personnel updates:

- As of April 15, Marc D. Smith has been officially appointed as Director of DCFS. Director Smith has previously worked in DCFS as an administrator.
- Carol Morris, Associate Deputy Director for Licensing, is retiring on April 30. Edie Washington Gurley will be Acting Associate Deputy Director until a replacement is identified.
- Bridget McKnight is also retiring April 30, so a new Northern regional administrator is needed.

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- There is also a vacancy in the Central regional administrator position.

George provided updates on the status of background check authorizations:

- There is not a backlog of new fingerprint authorizations to be processed. Any new 718 authorization requests should be processed within one week. If a provider is waiting 2-3 weeks for new fingerprints to be processed, they should contact George directly so they can find the problem.
- However, there are still challenges with processing reprints, so there continues to be around 1,400 outstanding reprints for day care providers. The department needs providers to ensure that when they or their staff receive a reprint notice, they act on it immediately.
- The most recent challenge has been the result of transitioning to a new vendor as of March 25th. The new vendor's software is not compatible with older fingerprint technology and cannot process requests for fingerprint updates. As of yesterday (April 24), over 3,000 fingerprint updates are still pending. Yesterday afternoon, to address this issue, the department signed a short-term contract with the previous vendor to process those outstanding fingerprint updates. Around 1,650 prints have already been sent to the previous vendor under this short-term contract.

The regional licensing forums are happening across the state this week (April 22-25). Edie Washington Gurley and Carol Morris shared initial outcomes and feedback. There has been tremendous turnout in some areas, including 92 participants in the Belleville forum for center-based providers. The presentation, used for each of the forums, as well participants' questions, focused mainly on lead in water testing requirements.

V. Council Member Announcements or Suggestions

Discussion:

The co-chairs opened the floor for council members to share any items on their minds that they would like the co-chairs to consider bringing to a future council meeting for further discussion or assigning to a committee for further investigation. Members raised the following topics:

- Continued messaging and communication related to lead testing and mitigation in order to support providers as they continue to implement these requirements
- ISBE/ELC Inclusion Subcommittee survey of community-based early childhood programs and school districts to better understand current practices in caring for children with disabilities in child care; advisory council and department could use findings to identify improvements and priorities
- Opportunities to update the licensing standards to reflect changes in technology; for example, licensing standards require hearing and vision screenings are in accordance with the IL Department of Public Health's hearing and vision screening codes, but those are based on antiquated machines, and providers should be able to access better technology and up-to-date services in their communities.

Decisions:

George and Maria will discuss the items mentioned and follow up with members to discuss further

Point Person:

Deadline(s):

VI. New Standing Committee: Policy and Rules – George Vennikandam, Maria Estlund

Discussion:

The council co-chairs announced the creation of a new standing committee on Policy and Rules, which will be co-chaired by Carie Bires (Ounce of Prevention Fund) and Jay Crome (DCFS). This committee will provide the department with guidance and recommendations on proposed administrative and legislative policy

changes. The committee co-chairs, along with the council co-chairs, will develop a work plan and a standardized process for the committee to participate in the rulemaking/legislative processes and engage the full advisory council.

VII. Early Childhood Workforce Initiatives – Bethany Patten, Governor’s Office of Early Childhood Development

Discussion:

Bethany Patten from the Governor’s Office of Early Childhood Development (GOECD) presented to the advisory council information on efforts underway to address the workforce and staffing challenges facing early care and education – a topic discussed previously by the council.

- Bethany’s presentation laid out the several different advisory boards, councils, and committees working on various aspects of workforce – qualifications, pathways, knowledge base, and compensation – and opportunities for members of this advisory council to get engaged or follow those efforts.
 - One item the council discussed in-depth was what is being one in regards to messaging to encourage students to go into early childhood and the importance of not only developing the right message, but also having the right messengers (do they look like the student/target population; do students trust their experiences and opinion, etc.)
- Bethany also shared about an ongoing project GOECD and other stakeholders are working on, which is funded by the National Governor’s Association, to identify viable compensation strategies in early childhood. They have completed a national scan of compensation policies and strategies, and are currently working on cost models to analyze impact of rolling out specific compensation strategies in Illinois. The workgroup plans to draft a consensus statement about what strategies to pursue, and seek feedback and input on that statement from the field.
 - Bethany will come back to the licensing advisory council for feedback on the draft consensus statement.

During the discussion on workforce challenges, Tom Layman clarified that the enforcement of ExceleRate qualification standards has been suspended, and they are working on spreading the word to providers. Quality Specialists are still helping programs to create quality improvement plans.

<p><u>Decisions:</u> Bethany Patten will bring back to the council the draft consensus statement when ready; council will provide feedback.</p>	<p><u>Point Person:</u></p>	<p><u>Deadline(s):</u></p>
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VII. Policy Updates

Discussion:

Office of Child and Family Policy (OCFP) personnel updates:

- Stacey Simek-Dreher shared that she will be stepping out of licensing policy to transition to child welfare, and Victoria Range and Merissa Pryor will be taking over licensing policy; Victoria will be lead on day care licensing.

Maria Estlund provided legislative updates:

- Last week was the deadline for bills to be passed out of their original chamber and sent to the other; most bills discussed at the last advisory council meeting did not successfully move before the deadline. At this point, there is still not much going on in terms of budget or revenue negotiations. At

the next council meeting, Maria will share a full recap of session outcomes.

The council discussed the grace period for children in families experiencing homelessness:

- CCDBG requires states to allow grace periods for families experiencing homelessness to provide medical records, immunization documentation, and birth certificates.
- DCFS has drafted proposed rule changes allowing for a 90-day grace period, but at this point it is still internal and has yet to go through the JCAR process or be adopted. IDHS has already adopted this 90-day grace period policy for families applying for Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP). Now, there have been some situations where a family may get CCAP and try to enroll in child care, and the provider says the family has to provide those documents at the time of enrollment – because the licensing standards require it.
- Licensing staff have been told not to cite providers for providing families experiencing homelessness with time to obtain these documents. In lieu of official DCFS policy in writing, DCFS will post the notice from IDHS about the grace period (Appendix A) on the DCFS Sunshine website.
- Council members shared that at a recent meeting for Chicago programs, there was information shared on how to get free copies of birth certificates. DCFS will also post this information on the Sunshine website.

Decisions:

DCFS will post the IDHS notice on the 90-day grace period for families experiencing homelessness to provide medical records, birth certificates, and immunization documentation on the DCFS Sunshine website, along with information on how to easily obtain free copies of birth certificates.

Point Person:

Deadline(s):

VIII. Updates: Lead in Water Testing Requirements – Carol Morris, Maria Estlund, Council

Discussion:

The deadline for providers to send their water samples to an approved lab is next week (May 1, 2019). DCFS provided data on the providers who have already submitted to DCFS:

- 3,330 providers have provided DCFS with the construction date of their facility.
- Just over 1,000 providers have submitted lead test results
- 364 providers reported lead present at or above 2.01ppb
- 702 providers reported no lead present at or above 2.01ppb

Those providers reporting lead to be present at or above 2.01ppb have to submit mitigation plans to ensure children are not exposed to those sources of water. Council members discussed the need for providers to have access to helpful resources and support navigating mitigation.

Maria shared an update on lead in water training opportunities. Illinois Action for Children and Elevate Energy had developed a webinar series that DCFS approved as meeting the training requirement in licensing, and at this point, over 1,000 individuals had accessed those webinars. Maria also shared that they were working with INCCRRA to repackage the webinar content into an i-learning module that will be available on i-learning soon. DCFS is continuing to get a sense of trainings out there that meet the licensing requirements, and the department will list them on the Sunshine website.

IX. Emergency Preparedness and Active Shooter Plans – Maria Estlund, Carol Morris

Discussion:

Legislation was filed this year to require licensed child care centers and homes to have active shooter plans in place. Legislators expressed some concerns around capacity, especially in licensed homes, to develop an appropriate plan for specific settings, and concerns about active shooter drills negatively impacting children and staff. In response, DCFS and advocates met with the sponsor and ultimately agreed that the licensing advisory council would consider this proposal in context of the existing emergency preparedness requirements and determine the appropriate steps.

The council had a lengthy discussion on what is already required and what is available to providers. IDHS clarified that the CCDF state plan states that CCAP providers have emergency preparedness plans in place that include active shooters.

An ad hoc committee on emergency preparedness will convene to develop recommendations on how, if at all, to address active shooter planning in licensing standards. The ad hoc committee will consider:

- What exactly is required for CCAP providers and how it is monitored
- Training needs and resources – Emergency Preparedness training available on i-learning website along with emergency preparedness planning guide, which has information on active shooter plans. Is this up to date? Should in-person training (i.e. drills) with emergency response officials be required?

The ad hoc committee on emergency preparedness will include Tom Layman, Mary Jane Forney, Edie Washington Gurley, Beth Knight, and any others interested. Tom will convene the group in the near future.

Decisions:

An ad hoc committee on emergency preparedness will convene to develop recommendations on how, if at all, to address active shooter planning in licensing standards.

Point Person:

Tom Layman will convene the ad hoc committee.

Deadline(s):

X. IDHS Updates – Kisha Davis

Discussion:

Kisha Davis provided several updates from IDHS that impact child care:

- The 4.26% CCAP rate increase for family child care providers is now in effect. The increase was included in the FY19 budget, but was held up for FCC due to contract negotiations. FCC providers will receive back payments, which are going out this week.
- As a reminder, the federal audit on background checks will be occurring in May-June. Thirty providers have been chosen for this audit, and those providers will receive notification soon.
- IDHS currently has a corrective action plan from the feds for not complying with full background checks for all staff in child care programs. There is an issue with staff age 13-17, who currently do not have fingerprint-based background checks. DCFS is not statutorily authorized to complete fingerprint-based background checks on individuals under 18 years old. George noted that child care programs can seek out fingerprint-based background checks on their own for these staff. However, if there is a federal statute that requires staff under age 18 to have fingerprint-based criminal background checks, George could try to make the case internally for overriding or amending state statute to give DCFS the authority to do this for child care staff.
- IDHS and DCFS are working together to implement the recent requirement to provide child care

assistance for children under age 5 receiving in-tact family services and for 6 months after their in-tact services case is closed. DCFS will provide IDHS with a monthly report of families whose cases are closing and will be transitioned to IDHS to receive CCAP services.

Decisions:

Kisha Davis will send George federal policy on fingerprint-based background checks for child care staff under age 18.

Point Person:

Deadline(s):

XI. Committee Reports (15 minutes)

- a. Data – Theenshina Mayfield and Carie Bires

Discussion:

The committee has not met. Carie Bires is transitioning to the Policy and Rules Committee, so the council co-chairs will be considering replacements for co-chair of this committee.

- b. Communications – Ken Yordy

Discussion:

The committee has not met, but did share they have heard from providers that a number of labs are backed up in processing water samples for lead. DCFS clarified that providers need to send samples to the labs by May 1st, but they understand providers will not necessarily have their results back by then, or even quickly after if the labs are delayed.

- c. Systems Integration – Carol Morris and Tom Layman

Discussion:

At the previous meeting, the Systems Integration Committee was asked to look into issues regarding differences in how DCFS and IDHS address the age of the child. In particular, the fact that licenses are for serving children up to age 12, but under new 12-month eligibility rules, CCAP now will serve children into their 12th year. The committee determined it needed more information, including any federal law or policy behind the CCAP change, in order to fully understand the issue and make recommendations for alignment. Kisha Davis will provide the committee with more information.

Decisions:

Kisha Davis will provide the committee with more information on the issues re: age of children served.

Point Person:

Deadline(s):

- d. Training – Beth Knight and Edie Washington Gurley

Discussion:

See Appendix B for Training Committee Report.

Meeting Adjourned
Next Meeting: June 13, 2019 11:00am – 1:00pm

Appendix A: IDHS Notice on Grace Period for Families Experiencing Homelessness

Will add document here and save in PDF

Appendix B: Training Committee Report

Discussion Highlights – DCFS Training Committee

Thursday, 4/18/19

PARTICIPATING: Beth, Mary Jane, Edie, Denise, Pat, Missy, Maggie, Sarah, Jennifer, Sheila, Oni

1. Organizational Practices Work Group – Update/Next Steps

- a. **A brief overview of the 3.19.19 Work Group mtg was shared:** *Highlights include focus on gathering Licensing-related checklists, samples from a range of partners. Review and categorize for ease of use. Phase 2 would include gathering additional checklists related to ExceleRate, Accreditation, etc. Still need to finalize a “home” for resources and review/maintenance timeline; CCR&R System was discussed as a possibility/good fit. The Top Violations report will guide priority for checklist samples; however, there are several other processes within licensing regs where providers could benefit from checklist samples. Pat is going to think about key areas for family child care; Missy will consider for centers.*
- b. **During 4.18.19 Committee call,** Work Group recommendations were discussed and clarity established for the overall objective and next steps. Input from previous committee discussions and work group efforts guided the conversation.
 1. **OBJECTIVE:** (1) support best practices in programs by offering useful, voluntary, non-branded resources to providers – Phase 1 includes licensing-related organizational practices; Phase 2 includes higher quality efforts (e.g. QRIS, accreditation, etc.)
 2. **NEXT STEPS:** (1) gather samples/templates from professional development partners and providers; (2) review, organize, synthesize samples to ensure accuracy/quality and avoid duplication; (3) determine “home” and develop feasible maintenance plan
 - ii. Missy has been and will continue to collect samples; tools are impressive and helpful for providers.
 - iii. Sarah has offered to share a file of forms (e.g. new employee file, child file, etc.)
 - iv. A formal invitation to submit samples is being drafted by INCCRRA for distribution to R&Rs, DCFS Advisory Council, PD partners and programs.
 - v. While committee conversation regarding best practices and related resources originated from discussion about top licensing violations, it is important to remember these resources will not be “from” DCFS or “required” by DCFS. The overall intent is to support best practices in programs by sharing general resources/organizational tools.
 - vi. Final products should include appropriate disclaimers: tools for use/support only, not required, not DCFS endorsed; reminder that providers are ultimately responsible for what is in regs
 - vii. Committee discussion reviewed that providers are responsible for having all documentation noted in regs; although licensing rep may only request to see a portion, majority or all documentation. Consequently, a “visit” checklist isn’t a reasonable standardized tool to consider; rather, checklists and samples will be reviewed and promoted as tools to assist with licensing compliance.

2. Regional Forums – week of April 22-25, 2019

- a. Flyer is out; RSVPs coming in
- b. With limited space; providers prioritized
- c. Agenda topics include: lead; new background authorization form; violations; discussion time

3. Lead Training

- a. No deadline date because limited supply of training
- b. Topics covered – impacts of lead and mitigation
- c. May 1 citation if no proof of submission to an approved lab
- d. More communication with providers is needed regarding lead; lots of questions about training